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The Granddaughter Sings Lily Home (1994)

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The Granddaughter Sings Lily Home (1994)

This crossing's hard. Melinda stroked the hair
from Lily's brow, still thick and streaked with black
and white, the strangest gold between. She stroked the hair
and smiled when Lily creased her eyes, and thumbbed the tear
that leaked down whiteskin folds. She said:

I'll read a psalm, and sang a song of eyes and hills
and help that came from God. The last aunt died ten days
before -- *don't tell her, it'll kill her* -- but Melinda knew that death
lies not in knowing but in lying. *I will lift up mine eyes*
unto the hills. When Lily'd brushed her hair
its colours told her tale: black hair for youth, white for truth,
and gold to honour her father. *From whence cometh my help.*
A new tear tracked the first. Melinda's voice
split, cracked. *The Jordan River's deep and wide.* What did Lily fear?
I'll meet my children on the other side. This crossing's hard.